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SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID
STATE FOR TSUNAMI TASK FORCE 1
USAID/W FOR A/AID ANDREW NATSIOS, JBRAUSE
DCHA/OFDA KISAACS, GGOTTLIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER,
BDEEMER
AID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA
TSUNAMI RESPONSE MANAGEMENT TEAM

SIPDIS
DCHA/FFP FOR LAUREN LANDIS
DCHA BUREAU FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR ROGER
WINTER
ANE DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR MARK WARD
BANGKOK FOR OFDA SENIOR REGIONAL ADVISOR TOM
DOLAN
KATHMANDU FOR OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR WILLIAM
BERGER
GENEVA FOR USAID KYLOH
ROME PASS FODAG
NSC FOR MELINE
CDR USPACOM FOR J3/J4/POLAD
USEU PASS USEC

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SRI LANKA - EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMIS:
USAID/DART SITREP #13

SUMMARY

1. As of January 31, according to the Center for National Operations (CNO), the earthquake and tsunami had killed 30,959 people in Sri Lanka. The CNO is scheduled to transition responsibilities for the tsunami relief effort to the Ministry of Public Security, Law and Order during the week of February 7. The USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) in Sri Lanka is now focusing on program monitoring and evaluation as well as ongoing situational assessments. In late January, the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) issued a public notice stipulating guidelines for development in coastal areas, or buffer zones, of GOSL-controlled areas. End summary.

Death Tolls

2. The CNO, responsible for the overall coordination of the relief effort in Sri Lanka, reports that as of January 31 at 1600 hours local time, the earthquake and tsunamis had killed 30,959 people, injured 21,441 residents, displaced 552,641 persons, completely damaged 65,349 houses, and partially damaged 48,276 houses. Currently, there are 5,443 persons missing. According to the CNO, there are 309 camps housing displaced persons.

Status of CNO

3. According to the USAID/DART, the CNO is scheduled to close down tsunami-related operations at the end of the week of January 31. The CNO will transition responsibilities for the tsunami relief effort to the Ministry of Public

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Security, Law and Order during the week of February 7. The new unit is expected to be chaired by the Ministry Secretary of Public Security.

USAID/DART Programs

4. The USAID/DART has funded programs in emergency relief, cash-for-work, shelter, and micro-finance. Therefore, the USAID/DART in Sri Lanka is now focusing on program monitoring and evaluation as well as ongoing situational assessments. During the week of January 31, three USAID/DART teams deployed to the field to

cover all nine districts for USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) programs. The teams are assessing the progress of grant activities and facilitating coordination between USAID/OFDA implementing partners and the GOSL and Government Agents. This monitoring and evaluation is essential as all USAID/OFDA programs are now operational, and the USAID/DART hopes to leverage synergies across all program sectors to ensure that all current and arising needs are met.

Situation in Galle

15. The USAID/DART Logistics Officer (LO) located in Galle reported that the U.S. Military closed out operations in Galle District on February 1. According to the USAID/DART LO, the relationship between USAID and the U.S. Military was marked by good cooperation between both organizations. The Sri Lankan Military official responsible for coordinating with the U.S. Military and USAID told the USAID/DART LO that no outstanding issues or concerns remain in Galle following the U.S. Military's departure. The military official thanked the U.S. Military and USAID for their involvement in the relief effort in Galle.

16. The USAID/DART LO reported that the current concern in the health sector is the cleaning and rehabilitation of latrines in private properties as people return home. In areas where homes were destroyed, but slabs remain, relief agencies will clean the septic tanks, pipes, and squat plates and will make minor repairs to latrines instead of constructing temporary latrines. USAID/OFDA implementing partners are able to implement these projects and will work in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

Shelter

17. Discussions between the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the GOSL, and the major shelter relief organizations operating in Sri Lanka have resulted in the development of guidelines for the design of transitional housing. The guidelines highlight the need to establish shelter coordination committees-comprised of GOSL, U.N., and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)-at the district level and whenever feasible at the division level. The guidelines delineate three options for transitional housing: shelter kits, shelter packages, and transitional community terraced shelters. In addition, the guidelines outline implementation steps for shelter organizations to follow similar approaches in each district, ensuring that each affected family receives equal support.

18. In late January, the Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply issued a public notice stipulating guidelines for development in coastal areas, or buffer zones, in GOSL-controlled areas in Sri Lanka. The guidelines stipulate that residential and commercial construction along the western and southern coastal zones from Point Pedro to Dondra must be 100 meters inland from the coast. In the eastern and northern coastal zones, no construction is allowed within 200 meters of the coast. According to the CNO, the difference in buffer zones between the east and west coasts is due to the high population density in western coastal areas. According to local media reports, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has established a buffer zone of between 300 to 500 meters for construction in LTTE-controlled areas.

Donor Assessment Trip to Trincomalee District

19. From January 27 to 28, representatives from USAID/Colombo, the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the Netherlands conducted an assessment of Trincomalee District in northeastern Sri Lanka. According to the assessment team, 6 of 11 divisions in Trincomalee District and more than

100,000 people were affected by the tsunami. The team noted that confusion over land rights, and in particular the issue of buffer zones along coastal areas, has hindered the recovery process.

10. According to the assessment team, food needs in Trincomalee are covered and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) is scheduled to begin food distributions during the week of January 31. Water and sanitation needs remain as wells require repeated cleaning and internally displaced persons (IDPs) continue to move from schools into new camps. The shelter sector is a priority area for relief organizations operating in the district. The assessment team reported that relief agencies have pledged to construct approximately 20,000 semi-permanent and permanent shelters against a reported need of 9,000. Coordination in this sector will be a challenge for local government officials, according to the assessment team.

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USG Officials Visit to Galle and Ampara districts

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11. On January 27, the U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires James Entwistle, U.S. Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez, and Regional Director Jay Katzen visited affected areas in the Galle and Ampara districts where USAID-supported relief and rehabilitation work is underway. USAID arranged the visit and led the helicopter tour to help Peace Corps assess the appropriateness and practicality of sending Crisis Corps volunteers to support the overall USG response. The group met with local government officials and visited community clean-up projects, implemented by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) with USAID/OFDA funding, in both locations.

USAID/DART Staffing

12. As of February 3, there are eight members of the USAID/DART in Sri Lanka. Of the eight USAID/DART members, one individual is in Galle.

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